

## Public Interest Registry Contract to Manage .ORG Finalized

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### **PIR promises open, responsible and global stewardship of domain, new services/benefits for noncommercial organizations**

**Reston, VA** — The Public Interest Registry (PIR) today announced the execution of its contract with the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) to operate the .ORG top-level domain. PIR will assume responsibility from the current registry operator, VeriSign, on January 1, 2003.

"We are pleased to be moving forward in our efforts to serve the worldwide .ORG community," said ISOC President/CEO Lynn St. Amour. "PIR shares ISOC's vision of setting a new standard for registry services that will meet the unique interests of non-commercial organizations on the Internet."

PIR board chairman David Maher explained that "PIR will reinforce and build on .ORG's heritage as the home of non-commercial entities on the Internet through global education outreach and enhanced services. PIR's goal is to provide open, responsible and global stewardship of .ORG." This will be done through educational support, feedback mechanisms, superior technology, new services for noncommercial registrants, and international outreach.

The PIR board is composed of technologically savvy experts in a variety of areas from around the globe who share the vision for setting a new standard for registry services. They will guide the organization in the remainder of its staffing and administrative tasks through the transition and the first year of start-up. Board members include Gerry Baranano, Frode Greisen, Lawrence H. Landweber, Alan Levin, Andy Linton, David W. Maher and Marc Rotenberg. David Maher is the chairman, Andy Linton is the secretary and Alan Levin is the treasurer. Lynn St. Amour, ISOC President/CEO is an ex-officio non-voting representative to the PIR board.

PIR will assume the role of registry operator for .ORG on January 1, 2003. In order to minimize disruption and make the transition as smooth as possible, all parties have agreed to a 25-day phase-in period during which back-end services will continue to be provided by VeriSign. This phase-in period was requested by VeriSign and will have no adverse financial impact on PIR. It will also allow registrars more time for testing and thus enhance the stability of the system. On January 25, 2003, the back-end technical services for the registry will be cutover from VeriSign to Afilias, Limited, PIR's chosen back-end service provider.

PIR has a dedicated Web site - [www.publicinterestregistry.org](http://www.publicinterestregistry.org) - to provide detailed information on the transition to the public. Special processes have been developed to ensure a smooth transition for domain name retailers (registrars); registrants should see only minimal differences.

An extensive bid solicitation and evaluation process for the management of .ORG began early in 2002. ISOC submitted its proposal on June 18, 2002. The ICANN Board voted to approve ISOC's proposal on October 14, 2002 and subsequently entered into contract negotiations. PIR was established by the Internet Society (ISOC) in October 2002 and has subcontracted with Dublin-based Afilias Limited for operational support.

## **About .ORG**

The .ORG domain, which has come to be associated with noncommercial activities, is the Internet's third largest "generic" or non-country specific top-level domain (behind .COM and .NET), housing over 2.7 million domain names worldwide. Late last year, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) Board of Directors selected ISOC's proposal from among 11 organizations bidding to operate the .ORG top-level domain. VeriSign Global Registry Services' contract as registry operator for .ORG expired on December 31, 2002. PIR assumed control of the registry on January 1, 2003.

## **About PIR**

Public Interest Registry ([www.pir.org](http://www.pir.org)) is a not-for-profit corporation created by the Internet Society to manage the .ORG domain. PIR's mission is to manage the .ORG domain in a way that supports the continuing evolution of the Internet as a research, education and communications infrastructure, and educates and empowers the noncommercial community to most effectively utilize the Internet. PIR is based in Reston, Virginia.

PIR was created by the Internet Society ([www.ISOC.org](http://www.ISOC.org)). ISOC is a not-for-profit, open membership organization founded in 1991 and is dedicated to ensuring the open evolution, development and use of the Internet for the benefit of all people. It provides leadership in addressing issues that confront the future of the Internet, and is the organizational home for many of the groups responsible for Internet standards.

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